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# In Memoriam: Paul Baltimore (1971-2021)

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We are heartbroken to note the passing of Paul Baltimore, who received his PhD in History from UCSB in 2014. Paul died in Sacramento on April 8, 2021, having taught for several years at community colleges in the area. He was forty-nine.

A native of Philadelphia, Paul joined UCSB's History doctoral program in 2006 to study the history of U.S. foreign relations. His dissertation, "From the Camel to the Cadillac: Automobility, Consumption, and the U.S.-Saudi Special Relationship" (completed under the supervision of Salim Yaqub, Paul Spickard, Nancy Gallagher, and Bishnupriya Ghosh), examined U.S.-Saudi relations from 1945 to 1980. With astuteness, subtlety, elegance, and some playfulness, Paul chronicled the two societies' participation in a shared, though contested, culture of consumption based on notions of "automobility," by which he meant not just the network of industries relating to oil, automobiles, and highways but also the culture of the car. Throughout this period, Paul showed, U.S. and Saudi elites—political leaders, diplomats, business executives, and technocrats—worked to draw Saudi Arabia into the system of automobility. They encouraged Saudis both to keep exporting the petroleum that powered the system and to partake in a car-based mass consumer society. Searching and innovative, Paul's dissertation drew deeply on international history, Middle East studies, American studies, global studies, sociology, and critical theory.

While at UCSB, Paul distinguished himself as a devoted, accomplished, and highly popular teacher. Back when the History Department still had that designation, he served as Head Teaching Assistant in History 17C, for which he taught a special honors section and functioned as a liaison between the instructor and his fellow TAs, advocating for them with generosity and persistence. In his later years at UCSB, Paul taught his own summer courses, winning glowing accolades in student evaluations. He was the Graduate Fellow for UCSB's Center for Cold War Studies and International History during his first year in the program and an enthusiastic participant in the Center's activities throughout his time at UCSB.

After earning his PhD, Paul taught history courses at Sacramento City College, Folsom Lake College, and Cosumnes River College (the latter two also in the Sacramento area). At these schools, he worked tirelessly to make the study of history accessible, relevant, and engaging to his students, many of whom were socioeconomically disadvantaged, had received little preparation for college study, and had to balance their schoolwork with busy work schedules. Long before most of us developed online course materials, Paul created an array of hybrid courses that combined traditional and online teaching techniques. His instructional videos brilliantly integrated gripping visual elements with verbal presentations of critical concepts. Paul put a staggering amount of work into these materials, something his light and whimsical touch made it all too easy to miss. The community college students raved about Paul in their evaluations, many saying he was the best teacher they'd ever had.

Paul was a dedicated and energetic member of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges. He served on the FACCC's Executive Board and in 2019 received its Margaret Quan Part-Time Advocate of the Year Award. Paul was deeply concerned about the rapid contraction of job security in the academy and the growing necessity for college and university instructors to piece together precarious and poorly compensated teaching assignments, circumstances that sadly characterized his own teaching career.

Those of us who knew Paul—his students, teachers, colleagues, and friends—have so much to treasure. One former UCSB graduate student recounts the gusto with which Paul sang karaoke during a night on the town. Another recalls the delight his young son took in the hand-drawn comics "Uncle Paul" would send him. "We will miss his epic storytelling that was accentuated by his beautiful Philly accent," fellow union members wrote in a Facebook tribute. "We already feel the loss of his inquisitive mind, wise and wacky humor, and generous heart."

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As of this writing, a “Gathering of Family and Friends” in Paul’s remembrance was scheduled to take place on April 21, 2021, in North Cinnaminson, New Jersey. Conversations are ongoing over a suitable time and manner for members of the UCSB community to honor Paul.

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